

## CLAIMS

1. Mineral wool plant substrate comprising a coherent matrix of mineral wool and upto 20 volume % of an ion-exchange agent comprising a variable and/or fixed ion-exchange capacity of about 15, preferably 30 and most preferably 40meq/100g dry weight or more.

2. Substrate according to claim 1 wherein the ion-exchange agent is a cation-exchange agent.

3. Substrate according to claims 1 or 2 wherein the ion-exchange agent comprises soil minerals.

4. Substrate according to claims 1, 2 or 3 wherein the ion-exchange agent has a non-clay like behaviour with respect to swelling and shrinkage, and preferably has a stable zeolite, cage-like structure.

5. Substrate according to any of the previous claims wherein the ion-exchange agent has an average pore size smaller than the average pore size of mineral wool having a density of less than about 72 kg/m<sup>3</sup>.

6. Substrate according to any of the previous claims wherein the ion-exchange agent comprises a zeolite.

7. Substrate according to any of the previous claims further comprising an organic substance, preferably comprising sphagnum, peat, substituting the mineral wool for upto 20 volume %, preferably upto 10 volume %.

8. Substrate according to any of the previous claims further comprising clay, substituting the mineral wool for up to about 20 volume %.

9. Substrate according to any of the previous claims for use as a growing block.

10. Substrate according to any of the claims 1-8 for use as a growing mat.

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11. Substrate comprising a coherent matrix of mineral wool, a pre-determined amount of clay and a pre-determined amount of an organic substance, preferably comprising sphagnum, peat, substituting the mineral wool 5 for upto 20 volume %, preferably upto 10 volume %.

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